

Social Security Appeals Authority

Member Position Description, May 2025

Applications being sought

Applications are sought for Social Security Appeal Authority (the Authority) members.

The Authority's function

The Authority is established and operates under Schedule 8 of the Social Security Act 2018 (the Act).

The Authority's function is to hear appeals against decisions on income support entitlements made by the Ministry of Social Development that have been confirmed or varied by a local Benefit Review Committee.

Decision review information

Information about reviews of income support decisions, including the role of Benefit Review Committees and the Authority is available at www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/feedback-and-complaints/review-of-decisions.html.

Membership

The Authority consists of at least four members, under the Act. One member is appointed as the Authority's Chair and another member as the Deputy Chair. The Authority currently has seven members.

While it is not a requirement of the Act, the practice in recent years has been to appoint members as Chair and Deputy Chair with strong legal backgrounds, able to interpret and make rulings on complex legal matters.

The role of other members is to assist the Chair and Deputy Chair by providing broader community perspectives to the Authority's decision-making processes, as well as additional expertise on issues likely to come before the Authority. Members may also have legal experience.

Appointments to the Authority

Appointments are made by the Governor-General, on the recommendation of the Minister for Social Development and Employment after consultation with the Minister of Justice.

Members may be appointed for a term of up to five years, with three-year terms most common. Members may be reappointed.

Appointee information held

Information on those appointed to the Authority is collected and securely held by the Public Service Commission in a specialist

system, 'AppointNet'. For more details, please see the privacy statement at www.publicservice.govt.nz/system/crown-entities/crown-entity-resource-centre/appointnet-privacy-protocol.

Knowledge, skills & experience

It is expected members should have:

- strong connections to the wider community
- sound judgement, an appreciation of tribunal procedures and of the concept of natural justice, and an ability to conduct hearings in a manner that enables proper participation by all involved
- an awareness of and respect for diversity in all its forms, including differences in belief, gender, race, religious customs, age, disability, sexual orientation, and social or economic status
- an ability to communicate clearly and effectively
- a high level of personal integrity.

Some members should also have:

- practical knowledge of New Zealand social security legislation and regulations
- good statutory interpretation skills and an understanding of administrative processes.

Workload

The workload of members varies, but typically involves up to 10 days a month, over 10 months of the year.

The Authority alternates its hearings between Auckland and Wellington, but also travels to other centres from time to time.

Remuneration and expenses

Authority members are paid \$547 per day spent on Authority business. Fees are reviewed regularly by the Ministry of Justice.

Members are also entitled to receive payment of expenses when travelling for Authority work or in connection with their role as an Authority member.

Administrative support

The Ministry of Justice's Tribunal Division provides administrative support to the Authority.